

SCHOOL FOR
POETIC
COMPUTATION

Consensual
HACKING



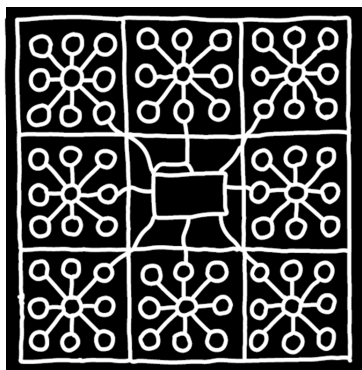
TAUGHT BY

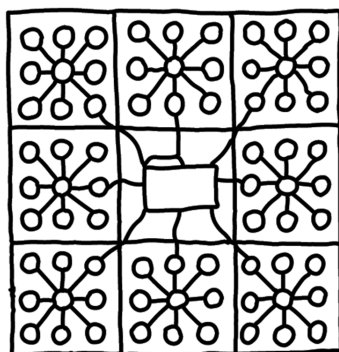
Melanie Hoff

Consensual Hacking is a collective thought experiment and a guided, participatory workshop focused on digital and social consent. Through conversation, writing, and hands-on computer access, participants explore what it means to give, withhold, or request consent in digital and sexual spaces.

Participants may choose to engage in a consensual process of hacking into each other's personal computers—a practice that raises questions around control, vulnerability, and care. What is social and digital consent and how are they interwoven? What does it mean to responsibly give and take access and control to our most intimate digital spaces? Is there pleasure to be found in a bounded exchange of trust and vulnerability?

Together, we'll navigate secure networking protocols and basic uses of the terminal, while also co-creating sociotechnical contracts that express our boundaries and desires towards a loving, secure, and mutual transgression of digital space.







Social Contract

SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY, NEARLY AS OLD AS PHILOSOPHY ITSELF, IS THE VIEW THAT PERSONS' MORAL AND/OR POLITICAL OBLIGATIONS ARE DEPENDENT UPON A CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT AMONG THEM TO FORM THE SOCIETY IN WHICH THEY LIVE.



The following persons will participate in this session:

Host: _____

Guest: _____

The Host defines the conditions and sets the boundaries of how the **the Guest** will treat you and your intimate computational space (your laptop) during this session.

Note: The session will involve only those persons specifically named.

This session will begin today, or soon thereafter as all participants are assembled, ready, and all necessary preparations are complete.

Duration: _____

Start Signal: A lit candle in the classroom

End Signal: An extinguished candle in the classroom

Description of session

In pairs we will remotely login to our partner's computers simultaneously. The protocol we will use is called ssh. The tool we will use is called the terminal. Also called the command line, the shell—is one of the first interfaces to the computer.

This session will last for the duration specified on the previous page. During this time, you and your partner will have full remote access and control of each other's computers through the terminal.

During this session, the guest will behave in exactly the ways defined in the Rules of Engagement section below by the host.

Rules of Engagement

This is an opportunity to make something surprising, fun, or intimate for your partner to find inside of your computer and for you to be invited to explore what they've left for you. Describing what you want when someone is in your computer is an invitation, not a demand.

Examples: you could invite your Guest to sift through a special folder on your computer, you could leave poetry files, or prompt the guest to leave a memory of fire from their childhood in a .txt file on your harddrive somewhere for you to discover later.

The Host (you) agrees to take full responsibility for this engagement.

*The Guest
agrees
to the
following:*

THE GUEST IS NOT PERMITTED TO:

These are non-negotiable

- Download any software
 - Delete or move anything
 - Take screenshots or recording of any kind
 - Change permissions on files (no chmod)
 - Login to anything besides my computer
 - Make any edits to existing files or folders other than adding new files
 - No copying or downloading of any kind
-
-
-
-
-

THE BOUNDARIES INSIDE OF WHICH THE GUEST IS FREE TO ROAM:

These are non-negotiable

When inside the host's computer, the guest will start in the home (~) folder. From there, they may only navigate inside the following folder(s):

Example: ~/my-folder-poem

Example: ~/this-folder-was-made-for-guestname

WHAT I WANT THE GUEST TO DO WHEN INSIDE MY COMPUTER:

Example: Describe to me a memory from your childhood in a file called before.txt. create this file inside of ~/this-folder-was-made-for-guestname

Before signing this contract,
consider the following:

Are you free to make this choice?

What are the pressures, if any, encouraging you to participate in this contract?

Do you feel like this choice is appropriately informed?

Optionally, to be extra safe, you may want to back up your computer.

Consider that this activity is similar to handing your computer to your partner for 10 minutes. The primary difference is your partner will be accessing yours remotely through the terminal.

Are you (the Host), comfortable taking full responsibility for anything that may come from this session?

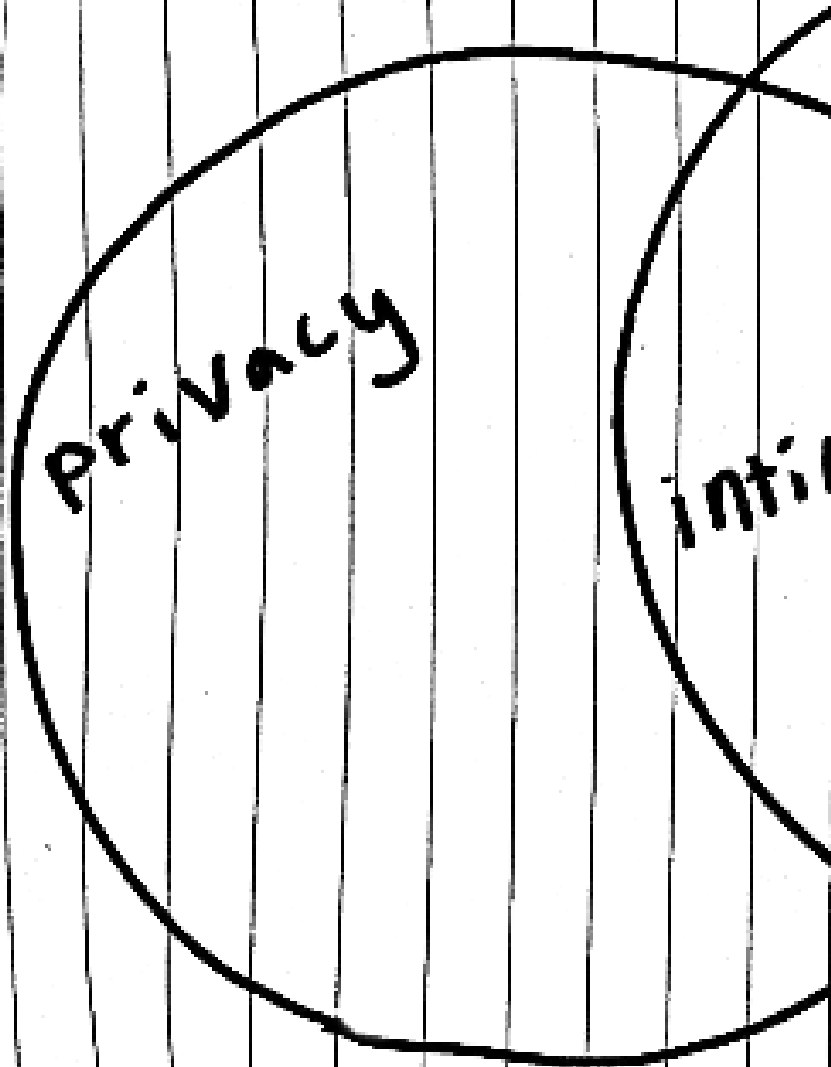
I as the Guest agree to abide by
this contract in its entirety.

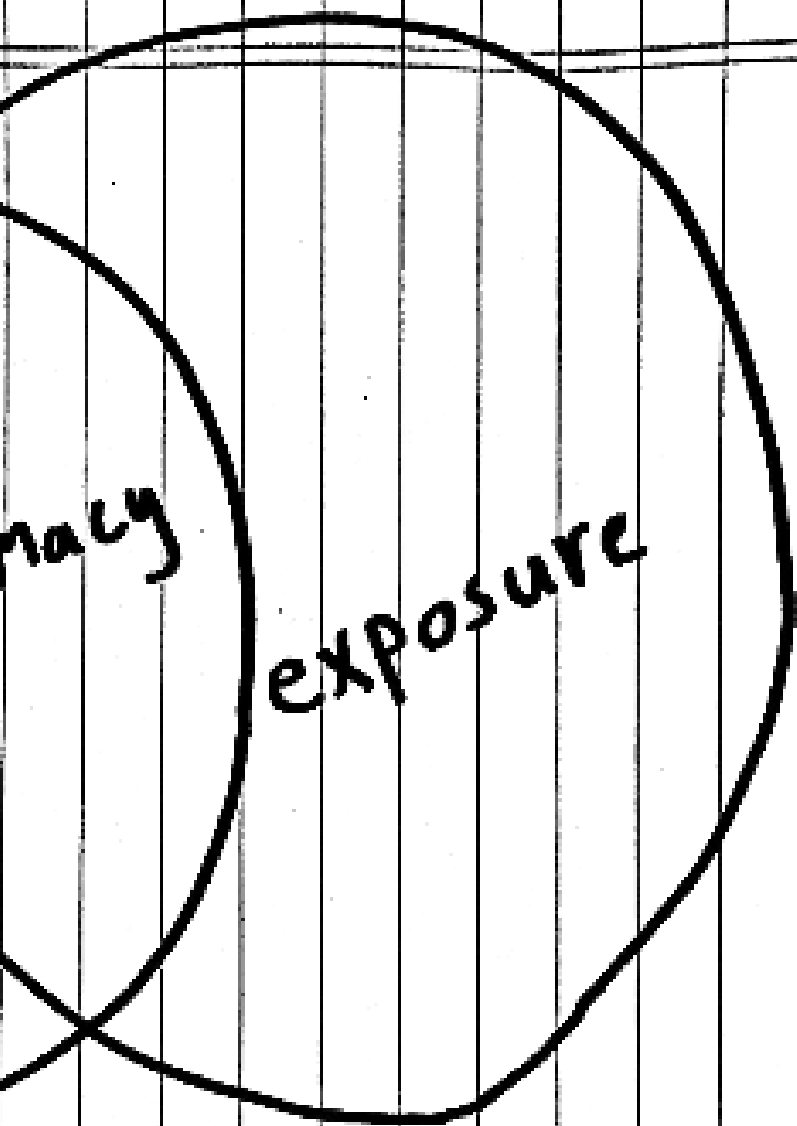
Signature of Guest: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Host: _____

Date: _____





```
Consensual <@> Hacking:$
```

Setup.

Move around in the room to sit across from your partner

```
Consensual <@> Hacking:$
```

2.

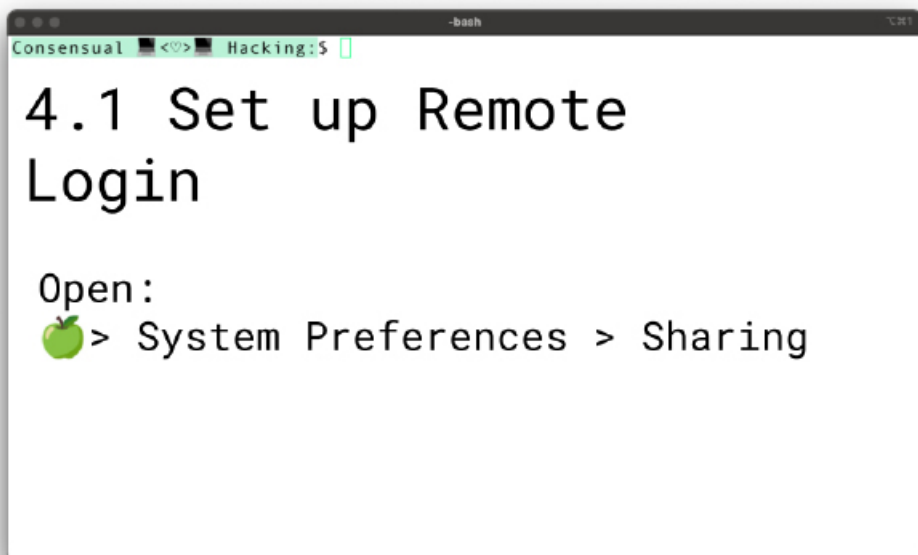
- **Exchange contracts** with your partner and read the *Rules of Engagement* section
- **Ask questions** you have to each other
- **Add any last changes** to your Host contract if you want to in pen on the page.

Consider that you could specify your partner only use the following commands while in your computer:

- `cd foldername`
- `cd ..`
- `ls`
- `tree`
- `echo "some text" > filename.txt`

3. Sign both contracts

Skip steps 4 through 7 if you are opting out of being a host

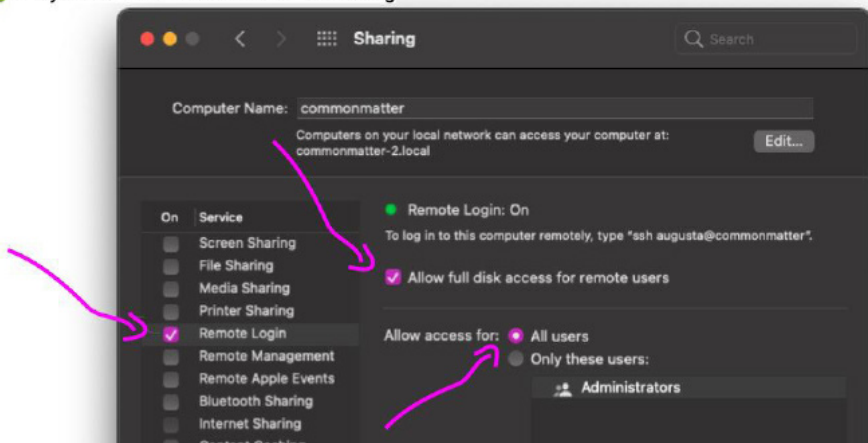


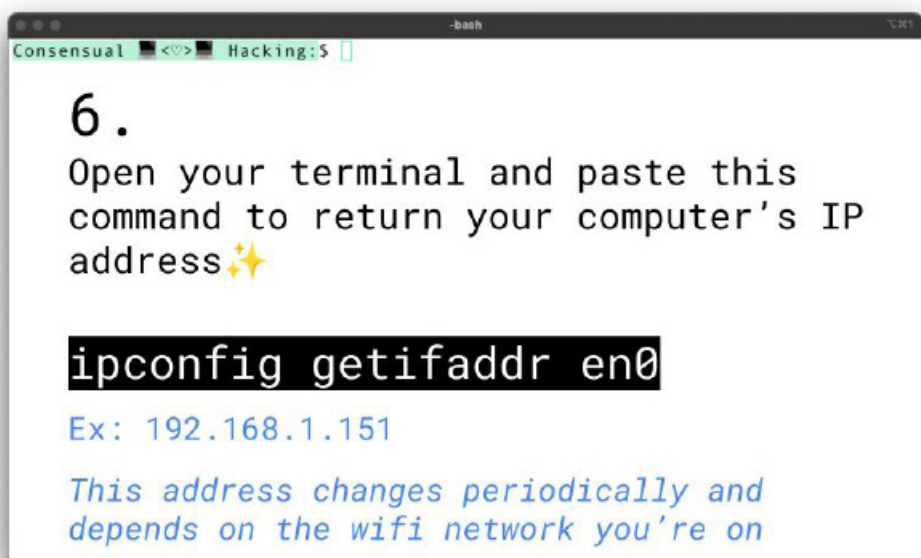
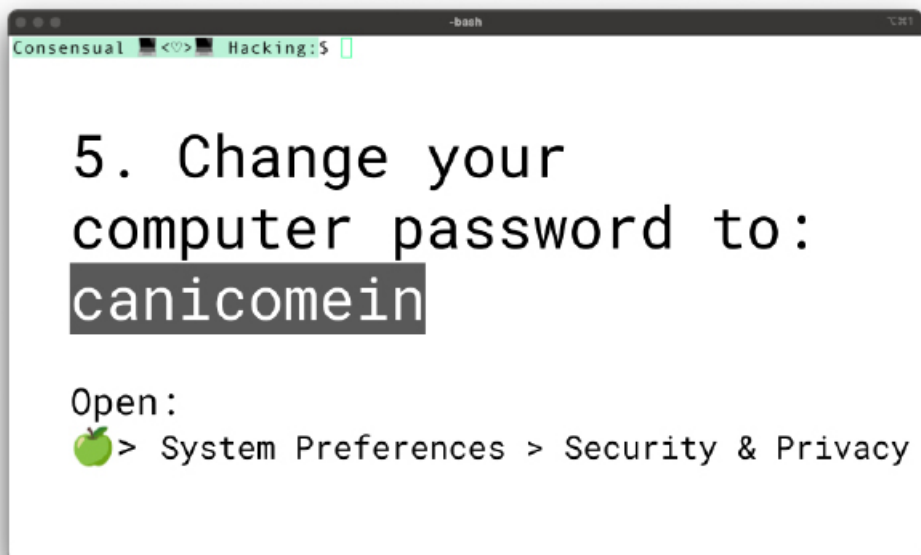
Open:

 > System Preferences > Sharing

4.2 Set up Remote Login

 > System Preferences > Sharing





Consensual Hacking: \$

7.

give the Guest this command:

`yourusername@IPAddress`

Ex: `augusta@192.168.1.151`

you can always check your username by entering: `whoami` in terminal

Consensual Hacking: \$

8. Final Step: ssh

In terminal enter,

`ssh yourpartnersusername@yourpartnersIPAddress`
type yes if it asks you to
PW: `canicomein`
(the password will type invisibly)

Ex: `ssh augusta@192.168.1.151`

If successful, pause here

Bash

Commands

*For navigating file paths in the terminal
and for leaving traces behind*

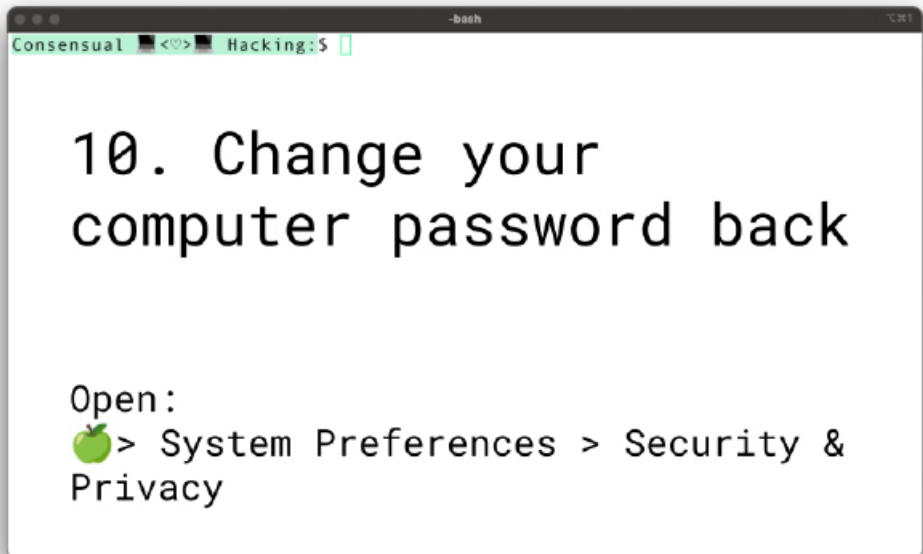
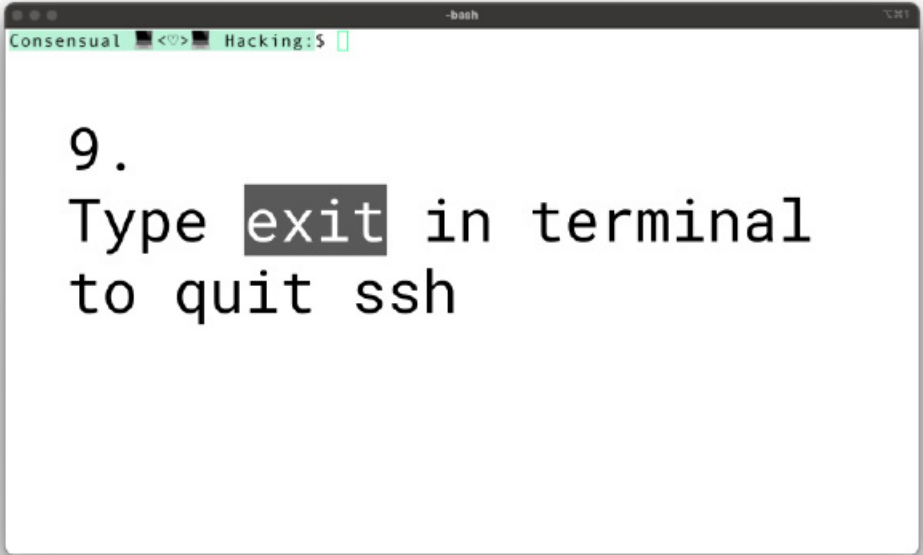
Command	Description
<code>cd foldername</code>	change directory
<code>cd ..</code>	change directory one level back
<code>ls</code>	list contents of directory
<code>pwd</code>	print working directory
<code>mkdir foldername</code>	create a folder named foldername
<code>touch dandelion.txt</code>	create a file named dandelion.txt
<code>echo "woof woof" > kitty.txt</code>	creates a text file called kitty.txt that contains the words, "woof woof"
<code>cat filename.txt</code>	print contents of file

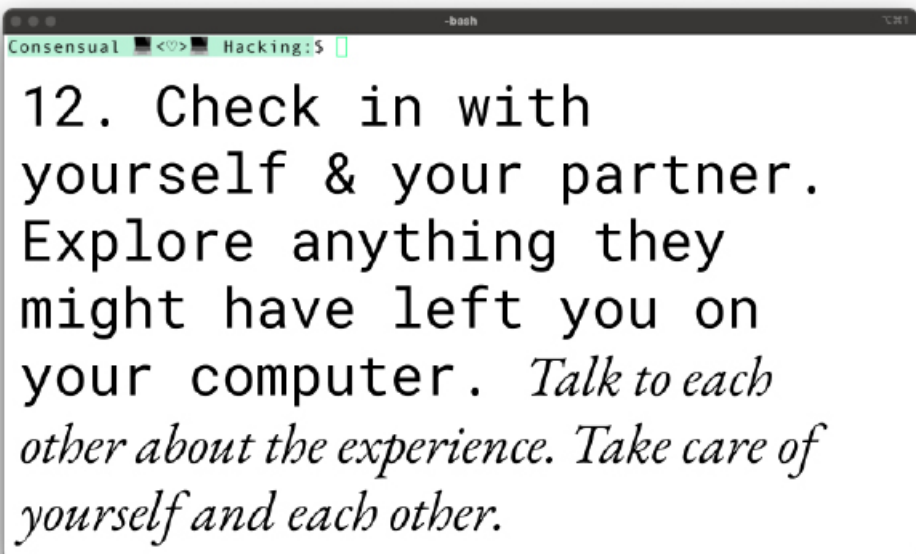
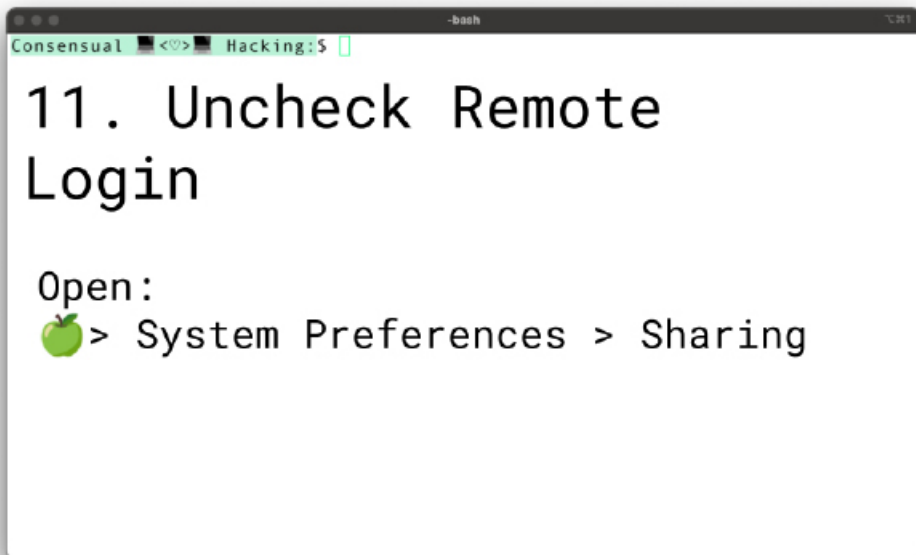
*Note: images and space characters can
be tricky to navigate in the terminal*



Figure 7.1 Remote login is a lot like astral projection.









i touch my keyboard and hope yours feels the same. i hope your keyboard feels the phantom touch of my hands, although i have never made contact with yours. i am idolising your laptop, i am connecting to it on an ethereal plane. a year ago, i found folder poetry. a year ago, i was excited by its possibilities. of poetics hidden deep in files. i wondered about my lost minecraft saves. in the game, you can craft and write books. i think of the chest, at the bottom of the sea, next to an island i spawned on. i think of what i wrote in that book, buried deep, buried deep in lines of game code that have been outdated by updates. no one plays 1.7 minecraft anymore. obsolete game data. i want to hack into my old games, to emulate them to emulate how i used to feel exploring vast worlds i did not know could exist on 16gbs of ram. i think of this txt file, buried deep in an alternate profile. will you read this? or any of the cue cards? i hide secrets in these folders. i'll tell you one right now: i wish that i liked computers as much as i thought i did. i hate being connected to my screen. computational poetics are a way for me to connect back to the love i used to have, to circumvent the frustrations of incorrect parsing. thank you for your work, for the love you put into your work, thank you for sharing what you have.

When I was in primary school, I ~~was~~ asked
this young innocent boy for his username
and password to an online game where
he had spent many hours and had
very powerful pokemon. I stole his
account and avoided him in school
after that. I would never do something
like this today, but its humbling to remember
I have in the past.

< > **a-computer-is**



a-gun



a-way-to-love

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU
CONSENTED TO BE BORN

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU
CONSENTED TO PERSONHOOD AS
DEFINED BY THE STATE

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU KNOW
EVERY PERSON WHO CREATED YOUR
PERSONAL DEVICES AND THE CODE
THAT RUNS ON THEM

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU UNDER-
STAND EVERY LINE OF CODE THAT
RUNS ON YOUR DEVICES

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU
CONSENTED TO USE YOUR DEVICES

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU USE
YOUR DEVICES



